
**Economic Development,
Agriculture & Trade Committee**

HB 3033

Brief Description: Creating an advisory committee to evaluate animal identification programs.

Sponsors: Representatives Pettigrew, Kristiansen, Grant, Kretz, Holmquist, Cox, B. Sullivan, Clements, Campbell, Haigh, Newhouse and Linville.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Directs the Department of Agriculture to convene an advisory committee to examine national and state animal identification programs and recommend a plan by December 1, 2006 for implementing the state's component, including funding.

Hearing Date: 1/30/06

Staff: Meg Van Schoorl (786-7105).

Background:

In 2004, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) initiated the National Animal Identification System (NAIS), intended to be a comprehensive information system to support ongoing animal disease monitoring, surveillance, and eradication programs. When fully operational, the system is planned to be in use in all states to identify and track animals as they come into contact and commingle with animals other than those in their premise of origin. The system is intended to enable animal health officials to trace a sick animal or group of animals back to the herd or premise that was the most likely source of infection, and to trace forward animals that might have been exposed but later moved away from the infected herd or premise. A stated long-term goal is for the NAIS to be able to identify all premises and animals that had direct contact with a foreign animal disease or domestic disease of concern within 48 hours of discovery.

Implementation of the NAIS involves both the federal and state departments of agriculture and has three phases: premise registration; animal identification; and animal movement reporting. The state Department of Agriculture (Department) began voluntary premise registration in January 2005. In the past year, 875 premises have registered. Issuance of unique individual or group lot animal identification numbers is the second phase. Nationally, a number of industry/government, species-specific workgroups have formed to consider which type of identification will work best for their particular animals. Methods under consideration include radio frequency identification tags, retinal scans, DNA, and others. The third phase will involve collection of information on animal movement from one premise to another. The program is currently

voluntary at both the state and federal level, but may become mandatory at the national level in 2008 or 2009. The USDA is investigating options to protect the confidentiality of the information.

Summary of Bill:

The Director of the Department must convene an advisory committee whose members represent livestock industry segments that will be involved in state-level implementation of the national animal identification program. The Director is required to consult with affected industry organizations in making committee appointments, and is authorized to appoint additional members as needed.

The advisory group will:

- evaluate the national animal identification program;
- examine approaches taken by other states, with an emphasis on neighboring states and those with the largest amount of livestock trade with Washington;
- develop an implementation plan including recommended funding amounts and sources;
- consult with the Office of Financial Management on the funding plan; and
- provide a final report to the Legislature by December 1, 2006.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.